



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

V.—*Notice of a Journey from Whyddah on the W. Coast of Africa to Adofoodiah in the Interior.* By MR. J. DUNCAN. Being a letter addressed by the traveller to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, and dated Cape Coast, October 4, 1845.

I TAKE the earliest, though but a brief, opportunity of communicating to you the news of my safe return to Cape Coast after an absence of nearly eight months, and a most successful journey across that part of the Kong mountains called Mahee, and extending about 180 miles E. and W. But as the vessel sails this day for London, I must postpone details till another time.

I believe that in my last letter to Mr. Shillinglaw I mentioned my running down the coast to Whyddah, there to await the King of Dahomey's return to his capital from his annual wars.

During my sojourn at Whyddah I had an excellent opportunity of visiting the people of that and of the neighbouring towns, and observing their manners, as also of ingratiating myself with the most influential individual of the place—Senhor Don Francisco de Suza, of slave-dealing notoriety. He is a Portuguese by birth, seventy-five years of age, and has resided in Whyddah between forty and fifty years. He is, although a slave-dealer, an excellent man, kind and generous to every Englishman. His influence with the King of Dahomey surpasses that of any other person, and I have found him in reality one of my best friends. Suffice it to say, he obtained his majesty's free permission for me to visit his capital, the king saying, "he should be much proud by being visited by one of the Queen of England's soldiers, and would afford me every protection while in his dominions." This message was truly gratifying to me under my circumstances, having been peremptorily refused by the King of Ashantee the passage through his country, though the application had been made by Governor Hill. My determination, however, had already been taken to fulfil my promise to my friends in England, or perish in the attempt.

I now laid out what little money I had left in the purchase of such presents as were suitable to the King and Cabareers, equipped myself in the uniform of the Life Guards, and mounted on a good horse of the country, started on the 6th of June for Dahomey or rather Abomey, where I arrived on the 10th. Here I was received with military honours, and escorted to the best house in the place. On the following morning his majesty sent his compliments, intimating his readiness to receive me in due form. I accordingly mounted *en militaire*, and proceeded to one of the king's palaces, where I waited in the level space in front, and where his majesty's chair was placed. He soon made his

appearance, and took his seat. He was dressed in a plain neat-patterned cotton robe. He rose and bowed to me very gracefully, and then expressed his wish that I would salute him after the English manner. I accordingly advanced slowly with drawn sword, coming to "recover sword" in the advance. The motion pleased him so much that he requested I would repeat it. He then asked me to ride in a circle, and upon my putting my little horse into a canter, his majesty called out lustily for me to stop, sending two men to hold me on, one on each side. But I told him that was not English fashion, explaining to him at the same time that English soldiers fought in a body of many thousand men on horseback, and sometimes singly. This seemed very much to astonish him as well as all the Cabareers, particularly when I performed the sword exercise at a gallop, and he exclaimed, "Now Dahomans may be proud when Queen of England send fine head soldier messenger to see their king on friendly terms. Now he was well pleased and satisfied Englishman be Dahoman's friend." At the same time ordering his soldiers to look at me before I dismounted, telling them I belonged to the queen of all white men in the world, and he himself king of black men, Ashantees not excepted. (Some Ashantees were present who had come to the Custom, begging his majesty to intercept me.)

I then dismounted and advanced towards his majesty, with the Cabareers, my conductors, these latter performing the usual humiliating ceremony of prostrating themselves and rubbing their heads and arms with dust. The king shook me heartily by the hand, welcoming me to Dahomey in the name of the Queen of England, at the same time asking me after the queen's health and family. He then proposed her majesty's health, which we drank very cordially in some good cherry brandy. We then sat down, a seat being provided for me close to his majesty's left, with several men to hold a large umbrella over my head. Then commenced a review of about 6000 female troops, well armed and accoutred. Their appearance, for an uncivilized nation, was really surprising, and their performance still more so. But I must not here dwell upon details, leaving the two following days of the review and the rest of the Custom for the readers of my journal, if it shall be found worthy of notice.

After receiving the most unbounded attention and kindness, with abundance of provisions, till the 17th, the king then furnished me with a guard of 100 men to accompany me all through his dominions, and across the Mahee or Kong Mountains. He had even had the path cleared as well as possible for upwards of 100 miles, and had actually so arranged that at every little kroom and village, provisions were always waiting ready cooked for us; and in towns where we slept, sometimes eighty and ninety large

calabashes were arranged in the market-place. Everything was always presented to myself by the Cabareer, when I made the distribution among my soldiers and people. Their cooking is excellent.

You will perhaps be surprised when I inform you that the Kong Mountains to the N. of Dahomey are considerably out of their true geographical position in the map. These mountains are truly grand and imposing, although they are not what most Europeans would expect them to be. Their first appearance, on approaching from the S., is that of huge ruins of immense stone buildings of colossal proportions. They consist of blocks of granite, marble, and ironstone. On advancing nearer, the appearance changes to that of oval blocks resembling eggs laid on their side: this is particularly the case where one large block is disconnected from the chain or crescent. Some of these blocks are 200 feet high from their base, which is generally a true level without any rise as you approach them. Nearly all the towns are built on the very tops of these mountains, and are constructed of clay carried up the steep, which are in many cases perpendicular, and ascended by steps cut in the rock. As the inhabitants never think of using stone, their buildings are not proof against musketry, and more and more of these towns are annually becoming subject to the Dahoman government, under whose laws they seem very happy. When a large town is blockaded, the invading party generally station in the night and quietly reconnoitre the place. If the ascent to it be found practicable, the attack is made early the next morning; but if not, their communication is cut off from the contiguous mountains of the chain, and sentinels placed at short intervals round the foot of the mountain to prevent escape. The besieged have great confidence in their poisoned arrows, which are much dreaded; but they are of no avail against the Dahoman muskets. The besiegers generally commence their operations just before the crops in the plain are ripe, so that they have all the advantage of provisions, and their victims become an easy prey.

I have mapped my journey; that part of it which lay among the Kong Mountains was chiefly in a direction E. and W., and I found it a country of great interest to the geologist and botanist. (What a pity all my botanical friends relinquished the journey.) I have noted everything in my journal; the character and dip of the strata, the nature of the minerals, the temperature of the springs, &c.

In consequence of information received from a Mohammedan priest respecting the murder of Park, I travelled to the distance of $13^{\circ} 6' \text{ N.}$ by observation, and longitude, by dead reckoning, $1^{\circ} 3' \text{ E.}$ The town called Adofoodiah is of considerable size, with

a large market, where articles from the Mediterranean are exposed for sale, as well as bracelets and anklets from Bornou. Here I met a fine-looking man, a Bornouese, who, to my great surprise, could speak Spanish, and who told me he had been twenty-one years a slave in Bahia, to the firm of Busby and Johnson, of Liverpool; he said he had been head-cook during that period; he signed his name "Warranio, Libertad me dio 15 de Abril de 1825." I also met a Tripoli merchant I had seen at Egga when with the Niger expedition. Amadi Fatuma was, it appears, the principal (cause?) of Park's death. Having complained to the King or Chief of Yaouri that Park had discharged him without paying him his full wages, Park was interrogated upon the subject, and of course indignantly denied the charge; whereupon an attempt was made to detain the canoe, which was at the time moored to the bank by a piece of rope. Park, said my informant, cut off the hand of one of the people attempting to detain the canoe. This was the commencement of the affray, which ended in the traveller's death. This old priest, Terrasso-wea, further states, that about four years after, a white man from Constantinople came in search of Park's papers; that he, the priest, saw this person purchase at a high price a long tin tube with large sheets of paper in it; but that after the purchase the king declared the price too little, and made a fresh demand upon the poor merchant. The books, it appears, were distributed into different hands; many were cut up and sold as amulets, and some were carried to Boussa, where they remained a very long time. Terrasso-wea himself, from having demanded of the king a portion of his pay, which was several years in arrear, had been compelled to leave Yaouri, and has since, he says, travelled over nearly the half of Africa. He is a fine venerable old man, of 65 or 66 years of age, and about 5 feet 10 inches in height. He says that he has been more than twenty times in Timbuctoo, which he describes as not so large as Adofoodiah, and famed only as a great exchange-mart for goods, in consequence of the facilities for transport afforded by thirty-six tributary streams which enter the Niger or Great River within 1 league of Timbuctoo.

I would gladly have proceeded further, or have remained in Adofoodiah a day or two longer; but as I had, accompanied by four people, stolen a march in advance of my main guard at Baffo, the last place of Dahoman authority, and knew that the cabareer, or captain of the guard, was answerable at the risk of his own head for my return to Dahomey, I resolved upon returning.

I cannot now enter into a detailed account of the country traversed. Beyond the Kong Mountains, for the distance of more than 180 miles, it is nearly a perfect level, with the Shea Butter-

tree and Palmstree. Few rivers of any magnitude, or of more than 20 or 30 yards in width, traverse it (they are all described in my journal).

My journey back was extremely fatiguing; but the men were very anxious to return to their comrades. The African is generally a great coward when away from his own locality, or distant from a main body. As I had gone further than I had anticipated, all my cowries were expended, so that, for our subsistence, we were obliged to steal corn and roast it; it was nearly ripe, and made a very excellent meal. Near the towns the land is beautifully cultivated, but the country in general is very thinly peopled.

Upon my return to Baffo I was received by the guard as one risen from the dead. After starting in search of the old priest, I had sent my fifth man back to Baffo to say I was only gone as far as the Dab-a-dab mountains to see a friend of mine, who I knew was living there at present, and that I would return in three days. However, when I reached the place, the priest and Tripoli merchant had gone to Adofoodiah, which delayed my return for many days. I forgot to mention that during the whole journey, with the exception of three or four days in the Kong Mountains, I was without bed or bedding.

On starting from Whyddah, I had engaged one of the crew of an American vessel, which vessel had been sold to the Spanish and Portuguese, and subsequently got clear off with 600 slaves. My new man was a French Canadian, according to his own account, and boasted a great deal of his valour and the numbers he had slain. While living at Dahomey I had detected him stealing cowries, although he had my keys to supply himself with anything he required. Upon being reprov'd, he immediately, with a terrible oath, took a tremendous clasp-knife he had suspended by his side, and threatened to assassinate me; but I had now got used to such fellows. I was compelled to knock him down, and with some difficulty I took the knife from him. I then gave him a good horse-whipping and kicked him out; but, although he had boasted so much of his valour, he was afraid to return to Whyddah alone, and begged I would forgive him and take him on, which I at last agreed to. But, being a drunkard, he was seized the first day with fever. I then gave him my horse to ride until we arrived at Baffo, whence, as I saw it was hopeless to take him any further, I sent him back to Dahomey, giving him my cane-bedstead and bedding, as also my umbrella, so that, as before stated, I was now without either bed or blanket; nevertheless my health and spirits were excellent, and my little horse still fresh. We were now returned to the king of Dahomey's dominions, where we had an overabundance of all sorts of provisions, and fruit of every kind, found in the country. The

cabareers of the different Mahee towns presented me with bullocks, goats, fowls, ducks, sheep, and pigeons of a very rare and curious breed.

On the 10th of August I once more returned to Abomey, where I was met by hundreds of people, who welcomed me with drums and gongs as I entered my old quarters. I visited my white servant, who was still alive, but very weak and suffering from dysentery.

I should have stated, that on returning to the Kong Mountains, I had myself been attacked with fever brought on by swimming across a river (which I was frequently obliged to do), and then riding until 10 o'clock at night in the rain, and afterwards sleeping in my wet clothes. However, I took strong doses of James's powder and Jeremiah's opiate, so that I was able to bear up against the fever, and was on horseback every day, although in a very exhausted state. But, on arriving at Abomey, I was quite rid of fever, though somewhat weak from its effects.

I was not destined, however, to get off so cheaply, for a few days after my return to Abomey, the weather being so cold (from 76° to 81° , and sometimes only from 71° to 78°), I again caught a fever which was likely to prove more serious. It may be remembered that, during the Niger expedition, I received a very severe wound in the leg; this wound has been open a great portion of the time ever since, but, upon this occasion, the leg swelled to a prodigious size, turning black all round the wound and ankle joint; this I considered a sure sign of gangrene. For the first and only time, since the commencement of my journey, my spirits now began to fail me: I was here alone with no one to take charge of my journals; and the observations on the latter part of my expedition, owing to my fever in the bush, were only still in notes. My success, which I knew was far beyond the most sanguine expectations of my friends, as well as my own, was now, thought I, to terminate here. A man learns to value his life but little; but, looking upon myself like a soldier on despatch, the idea of being prevented from executing to the full the wishes of my kind friends, weighed heavily upon me. I, however, derived some consolation from the reflection that if God thought proper to cut short my career at this period, my good and generous patrons would feel satisfied with my exertions. Under this impression I determined to watch my leg, and, in the event of any sudden change for the worse, to attempt amputation. I had seen several operations of that nature performed, and was provided with some surgical instruments, and others for dissecting birds, which might serve the purpose. I had given instructions to my black interpreter what he should do in case of my fainting, though in all probability his first care would be to take all he could get.

By poulticing, however, and keeping the leg in a horizontal position, the swelling was subdued and the wound sloughed; all the discoloured flesh in it came away, which afforded me great satisfaction. The fever was also abated; and, although the wound was a large one, and in a bad part (the tendon Achilles, at the lower part of the calf), yet I could manage with a stick to hop to the king's house, as we had a good deal of business together after my return, and a long conversation on the slave trade.

After many interviews, the king reluctantly consented that I should appoint a day for returning to the coast. The following morning, just as I had got carriers nearly ready to convey my white man to the coast, he died, without the slightest appearance of pain. I was scarcely able to attend and read the funeral service, which, however, with great exertions, I accomplished. This was the third European I had lost since my arrival on the coast, all through their own imprudence. The king gave me a fine country cloth to cut up to wrap him in, and a dollar of cowries to the grave-diggers, besides a quart of rum.

Two days after, his majesty sent for me to bid him good bye. He said he would always like to have Englishmen in his country. He spoke very frequently and warmly of Mr. Freeman, and inquired very anxiously when I thought he would return. After every assurance of a lasting regard for myself, and satisfaction at having had the honour of seeing one of the Queen of England's soldiers, we parted, with a cordial shake of hands and the firing of muskets, till I reached my house.

His majesty sent by Wyho (the English man's father, as he is called) 28 dollars of cowries and two kegs of rum to pay my expenses to the coast. He also sent me four fine native cloths, worked in the palace, one of which he directed me to put on my bed on my passage to England, as he understood it was cold on the sea.

In a former part of my letter I mentioned the presence of an Ashantee prince with his followers, and perhaps you are aware of the King of Ashantee's refusal to allow me to pass through his country, although the application was made by Governor Hill, who interested himself *much* in my favour. On the occasion of that refusal, the Governor replied to the King of Ashantee, that I would go to the Kong Mountains in spite of him, and that he was not to think his paltry country was the only way to those mountains; that I would go by Dahomey, where the king was a good and honourable man, and that I would pass without interruption. Upon this, the king of Ashantee sent one of his sons with his retinue and a gold-hilted sword as a present to the King of Dahomey, to induce him to intercept me. But the sword did not prevail against my interest. His Majesty stood up, showing

the sword, and declared that it should never induce him to do wrong to an Englishman. His father's first and best friend, he said, was an Englishman, and he should always be proud to boast of having them in his country, and would always be proud to have the honour of protecting them while one of his soldiers existed. I, of course, thanked his Majesty in the name of the Queen of England and her subjects. This Ashantee envoy had the impudence to tell me that Englishmen only came to Ashantee to get what they could out of his father, and that if his father had no gold dust he would have no presents from England. I felt a little nettled at this, and answered him accordingly. During the whole of the Custom, a good mahogany table was always laid for me in the court-yard, well furnished with choice cordials and plenty of provisions. No attention was paid to the Ashantee prince nor to the Portuguese nor Spaniards. The Ashantee laid in the dirt.

I shall now venture to offer a few words on my present condition. When I left Abomey, my presents were all exhausted; for I could not leave so noble and generous a man as the king without giving up the last disposable article. Myo, one of the king's head men, had also shown me such extreme kindness, that, in token of gratitude, I pulled off and presented him with my best coat, which the worthy man declined accepting until I should have reached Whyddah, from whence I sent it to him by one of the king's four messengers who had accompanied me on the road. On reaching Whyddah I was weak and greatly reduced, both from the effects of the fever and from anxiety respecting my animals on the road, and, as soon as I entirely laid myself up on account of the wound in my leg, I became worse. The captains of several of her Majesty's cruisers kindly volunteered to give me a cruise for the benefit of my health; but, having brought with me down to the coast, from where no European had ever been before, 10 fine bullocks, 11 goats, 2 sheep, 5 guinea fowls, 5 rare ducks, 11 very rare pigeons, and 16 domestic fowls, also of a rare breed, I could not leave them. Captain Lee, of the 'Jane' of London, kindly gave me a passage from Whyddah to Cape Coast, where I now am with all except the bullocks. I am at present the guest of Mr. Hutton. It is needless to endeavour to conceal the depressed state of my finances; but I beg you will not surmise for a moment that I communicate this with a view to obtaining more pecuniary aid than I have already received. My only anxiety is, will my kind patrons be satisfied with what I have done. Nothing would give me greater pleasure, after recruiting a few months, had my funds been adequate, than to have taken a direct line from hence, passing to the left of Ashantee to Timbuctoo, ascertaining the

true sources of the Niger, and following that river down to Raba. But now for a time I must be silent. Thank God I am much recovered in health.

* * * * *

I have just seen Mr. Freeman, who has delivered to me Sir T. Dyke Acland's compliments, and informs me that that gentleman has authorized him to render me pecuniary assistance. I cannot find words to express my gratitude for this; but Sir T. Acland has already behaved so generously, that I cannot think of further trespassing on his liberality until absolutely forced by stern necessity.*

* * * * *

VI.—*An Account of the Island of Arguin, on the Western Coast of Africa.* By Capt. JOHN GROVER, F.R.S.

I HAVE collected the following particulars of the island of Arguin from Mr. Northwood, Commander of the barque 'Margaret,' who was detained three weeks in captivity on the island—from Wm: Honey, who was eleven months a prisoner at Arguin and a neighbouring island—and from Mr. Vaughan, commanding the merchant-brig 'Courier.'

Before, however, entering upon a description of the island, I will relate as succinctly as possible the circumstances which led to the captivity of the persons from whom my information is derived.

I find by the ship's log of the brig 'Courier,' that on the 26th of May, 1844, the chief mate, Mr. Wilson, was sent with three hands to take soundings near the island. On approaching the shore they saw a white man, accompanied by two natives, who hailed them in English, and Mr. Wilson immediately landed on the point of the island to assist his supposed countryman. Seeing the boat approach, the natives began beating the white man with clubs; but a gun being pointed at them they fled, and the white man ran to the boat and was immediately taken on board the 'Courier.' He stated that his name was Samuel Phillipps; that he was a seaman belonging to the 'Margaret,' of London, commanded by Capt. Northwood, who, with a portion of the crew, was in captivity on the island, subjected to the most cruel treatment.

Capt. Vaughan immediately determined to attempt the release of his countrymen by ransom or otherwise; he therefore brought

* Funds have since been sent to Mr. Duncan to assist him in carrying out his views of visiting Timbuctoo and descending the Niger.—(Ed.)